

Paul Cuffee School

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting

May 20, 2010

A meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Paul Cuffee School was held on May 20, 2010 at the Paul Cuffee Lower School in Providence, Rhode Island.

Present: Luz Avila, David Burnham, Russell Carey, Elizabeth Colon, Allyn Copp, Joan Canady Countryman, Stefano Crema, Philip Gould, Keith Mathews, Maria Monteiro, Joop Nagtegaal, Martha Newcomb, Leanne Nyahkoon, Dorothy Patrick, Carolyn Pemberton, Sarah Reis, Babak Taleghani.

Excused: Su Almeida, Kathleen Alvarez, William Clifton, Sr., Ana Cecilia Rosado.

Paul Cuffee Staff Present: David Bourns, Becky Coustan, Jonathan Conklin, Nina Giannotti, Tina McDonough, Suzie Shaw.

Guests: Dan Moos.

The meeting was called to order at 6:15 p.m. President Joop Nagtegaal began by welcoming everyone to the May meeting of the Board of Trustees and noted that several members and Mr. Bourns would be arriving later, following the conclusion of hearings at the

Rhode Island State House regarding charter school reform.

In his opening comments Joop introduced Becky Coustan, new principal of the Paul Cuffee High School, and she was welcomed by the Board with applause. Joop also noted the many different issues on the state agenda with regard to education, including the Phase II Race to the Top application, the education funding formula, and ongoing financial uncertainties as the budget for next year continues to be debated at the Assembly. The School is budgeting conservatively as a result.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the March 25, 2010 meeting of the Board were approved unanimously. The motion to approve was made by Carolyn Pemberton and seconded by Babak Taleghani.

Head of School May Report

With Mr. Bourns still at the State House, Joop asked if there were any questions regarding his written report. Tina McDonough noted the number of parents who have advocated with their Representatives and Senators for housing aid reform and the hard work of Maria Monteiro, Crystal Gantz, Mark Santow, Julia Karahalidis and others on behalf of this important issue for the School.

Selections from the Jazz is a Rainbow Performance

Tina introduced a video presentation of highlights from the recent Jazz is a Rainbow performance by Middle School students at the Lower School. The Rhode Island Foundation provided financial support for the performance.

Q&A Regarding the High School

Becky Coustan presented on the current status of planning and activities regarding the Paul Cuffee High School, which will open with a ninth grade in the fall. She ran through the highlights of a presentation she recently made to rising ninth graders and their parents. At that meeting the students made flags representing their hopes and dreams for the new high school, and were also able to select a summer reading book. Becky noted that the most popular preference for potential after school activities were those involving academics and career preparation.

The high school program will run from 8 am to 5 pm everyday with all students present for the full day. After school programs are fully integrated with the curriculum. She reviewed the planned schedule, themes and curriculum and other issues. The high school will open on September 1, 2010, and anticipates a total population of 288 students by year four.

There was discussion of the progress regarding faculty recruitment. There will be three full-time teachers in the core content areas in the first year, along with part-time staff and faculty supporting other programs. A large number of applications per position have been received. There was also discussion of the proposed athletics and physical education programs, and the intent is to join with the Rhode Island Interscholastic League in the second year.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Nominating Committee

Joan Countryman delivered the report of the Nominating Committee. She referred to the committee's written report and noted that recommendations will be made at the June meeting regarding proposed changes to the by-laws and new members.

Finance Committee

Babak Taleghani delivered the report of the Finance Committee. The committee continues to anticipate about a break-even result in the current fiscal year. He reviewed the current status of the acquisition of the Living Room property (legal matters continue to be pending) and several other highlights from the written report. A motion was

made by Dave Burnham to repay the \$150,000 received by the School as a planning grant/loan from RIDE as there are no plans to expend the funds. Joan Countryman seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

Plant & Property Committee

Russell Carey delivered the report of the Plant and Property Committee. He reviewed the status of the Living Room property, the ongoing selection process for a landscape architect to work with the school on that property once it is acquired, and the efforts to secure a site for the high school for the fall. There were questions and comments from members of the Board.

Human Resources Committee

Carolyn Pemberton delivered the report of the Human Resources Committee. She reviewed the discussion of the salary administration process and steps, matters related to FMLA, and evaluation policy and process for the head of school which is being developed.

Other Business

David, Liz and Maria reported to the board on the hearing held by the House Finance Committee. Dave Burnham noted and thanked the Parents Association for their hard work at the Paul Cuffee School

sale. Recent success with regard to grants was also noted and applauded, and Joop reiterated the critical importance of 100% participation by members of the Board in the Annual Fund. Finally, mention was made of the citation presented by the Governor in honor of Mr. Bourns at the recent ceremony at the State House.

Adjournment

Martha Newcomb moved to adjourn. Allyn Copp seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Russell C. Carey, Clerk